

**Design and Historic Review Commission Meeting Minutes  
May 12, 2021**

A meeting of the City of Yuma Design and Historic Review Commission was held on Wednesday, May 12, 2021, at City Hall Council Chambers, One City Plaza, Yuma , Arizona.

**DESIGN AND HISTORIC REVIEW COMMISSION MEMBERS** present included Chairman Tom Rushin, Vice-Chairman Juan Leal-Rubio and Commissioners Amanda Coltman, William Moody, James Sheldahl and Sandra Anthony. Commissioner Chris Hamel was absent.

**STAFF MEMBERS** present included Robert Blevins, Principal Planner; Amelia Griffin, Associate Planner; Alejandro Marquez, Administrative Assistant, and Lizbeth Sanchez, Administrative Assistant.

**Chairman Rushin** called the meeting to order at 4:03 p.m. and noted there was a quorum present.

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**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

April 28, 2021

**Motion by Moody, second by Coltman to APPROVE the minutes of April 28, 2021. Motion carried (6-0) with one absent.**

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**ITEMS REQUIRING COMMISSION DISCUSSION AND ACTION.**

**DHRC-34825-2021:** *This is a request by C. Kevin Eatherly, on behalf of Ron Pailliotet, to demolish the Drake Hotel, located at 29-39 W. 2<sup>nd</sup> street, in the Brinley Avenue Zoning District.*

**Chairman Rushin** declared a conflict, recused himself from the Drake Presentation, and turned the meeting over to **Vice-Chairman Leal-Rubio**.

**Robert Blevins, Principal Planner** summarized the staff report, recommending **APPROVAL**.

**QUESTIONS FOR STAFF**

None

**APPLICANT / APPLICANT'S REPRESENTATIVE**

**Kevin Eatherly, Pilkington Construction, 2975 S Avenue B, Yuma Arizona**, stated that the owner's intent was to save the building, but it was not feasible due to the building's condition. **Eatherly** commented that the package provided to the Commissioners included a letter from Chris Thompson to show that they consulted with a Historic Architect in Tucson. The letter also explained how this project is interpreted through the Secretary of Interior Standards of Preservations.

**Commissioner Moody** questioned **Eatherly** about the letter as it was not included in the packet. **Eatherly** stated that the letter from Chris Thompson reviewed how the historic context of the building had been lost through its transitions.

**Chris Thompson, Thompson Design Architects**, stated that the owner's original intent was to preserve the building. **Thompson** read aloud the letter, which stated that most of the building's original and definable historic features had been removed during prior renovations, which reduced the historic value of the building. This resulted in a loss of integrity according to historic preservation principles. The letter recommended that the Commission approve the request to demolish the building and allow for a new structure.



**Moody** asked Eatherly if he was still going through development approval through the City of Yuma. **Eatherly** replied yes. **Moody** then asked if he was still going to demolish this building if approval from the City was not granted. **Ron Palliotet** stated that he would not demolish the building until he received approval to build a new structure.

**Moody** stated that he understood that the second floor was not salvageable because of the deterioration of the concrete and columns, but asked if there is hope for the first floor to serve again as a retail complex. **Palliotet** referred the question to the project engineer.

**Rob Campbell, Robert L Campbell Structural Engineer**, stated that additional analysis would need to be done to determine if that scenario would work.

**Commissioner Sheldahl** asked if the façade could be saved. **Chris Thompson** commented that keeping the façade was the original idea but after the structural analysis of the façade, it was determined that it would be a safety hazard for bypassers and the construction crew.

**Leal-Rubio** asked Eatherly if the request was approved when they would demolish the building. **Eatherly** responded that they needed to complete the application for demolition with the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality, and once that was complete it shouldn't take more than thirty days. **Leal- Rubio** stated that the Commission would hate seeing the building demolished and the property left vacant. **Palliotet** stated there would be no demolition until he had the approvals to build a new structure.

**Commissioner Coltman** asked if all of the buildings for the proposed new project would be constructed at the same time. **Palliotet** replied yes.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

**Jim Schuessler, 928 W 36<sup>th</sup> Place, Yuma Arizona**, congratulated the developer on this project. He added that building residential apartments would enhance the vibrancy in downtown.

**Moody** commented that he is reluctant to consider demolition in downtown and suggested a motion to approve the demolition subject to conditions in Attachment A but also subject to Municipal Approval of the proposed development by the City of Yuma.

**Leal-Rubio** stated that although the Commission is here to ensure that historical buildings are being preserved, the important thing is health, safety and welfare, and this project will be protecting the individuals who will be residing in the building.

**Motion by Moody, second by Sheldahl, to APPROVE Case Number DHRC-34825-2021 subject to the Conditions of Approval in Attachment A, and with the addition of Condition #4 to read "This approval is subject to Municipal Approval of the proposed development by the City of Yuma". Motion carried unanimously (5-0) with one absent and one recused.**

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**Vice-Chairman Leal-Rubio** returned the meeting to **Chairman Rushin**.

**DHRC-34909-2021:** *This is a request by Carmela Sheik, to remodel the exterior of the existing home, located at 721 S. Orange Avenue, in the Century Heights Conservancy Residential Historic District.*

**Robert Blevins, Principal Planner** summarized the staff report, recommending **APPROVAL**.

#### **QUESTIONS FOR STAFF**

**Sheldahl** stated that it seemed like the home previously had a grand porch. **Blevins** responded he could not find any pictures that showed a porch. **Sheldahl** responded that anything done to reintroduce an architectural element with sense of arrival to this home would be welcomed.

#### **APPLICANT / APPLICANT'S REPRESENTATIVE**

**Greg LaVann, 1150 S 9<sup>th</sup> Ave, Yuma, Arizona**, stated that he was the applicant's husband, and made himself available for questions.

**Moody** asked if this was a single-family or multi-unit dwelling. **Lavann** replied it was a single home. **Moody** stated that anything done to this house would be an improvement.

**Leal-Rubio** questioned if this home would be an investment or their primary residence. **LaVann** replied they would be selling the home. **Leal-Rubio** asked if they had plans on doing landscaping. **LaVann** responded they thought they would xeriscape because it was cost efficient, they have not made a decision yet.

**Chairman Rushin** thanked the applicants for investing in the Historic Area of the community.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

**Motion by Leal-Rubio, second by Coltman, to APPROVE Case Number DHRC-34909-2021 subject to the Conditions of Approval in Attachment A. Motion carried unanimously (6-0) with one absent**

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**Commissioner Moody left the meeting at 4:47 P.M.**

#### **COMMISSION DISCUSSION**

1. "Side Trips": A short presentation on the smaller historic sites with a focus on a particular location.

**Robert Blevins, Principal Planner** gave a brief update on a previous "Side Trip" presentation on The Methodist Episcopal Church in Yuma, Arizona.

#### **QUESTIONS**

**Commissioner Sandra Anthony** asked what kind of floor would be installed in the church. **Blevins** replied he was not sure, but he would find out and give an update at the next meeting.

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#### **INFORMATION ITEMS**

##### **Staff**

None

##### **Administrative Approvals**

None

##### **National Heritage Area**

None

##### **Commission**

None

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#### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:54 p.m.

Minutes approved this 26 day of May, 2021.

  
Chairman